

# RED SOX



## ENEMY LINES A RIVAL SCOUT SIZES UP BOSTON

What people forget with all the hoopla about the Yankees is that this Boston team won 93 games with no power. It's not gonna be like that again, not with **J.D. Martinez**. They'll have to play Martinez in the outfield a bit, but the problem with J.D. is that he gets hurt. He's a great hitter, but they should just take his glove away from him. . . . **Rafael Devers** has a lot of work to do defensively. He needs to work on his hands. He's gonna see a lot of missiles that way in that division. . . . **Mookie Betts** is an MVP candidate, and **Xander Bogaerts** is the whole package. For Bogaerts, it's just a matter of learning from the players around him. . . . **Chris Sale** is a perennial Cy Young candidate, but he tends to wear down over the season. They have to handle him properly by resting him or letting him skip a turn. . . . Their biggest problem is screwing **David Price**'s head on right. He may be too smart for his own good. Just go out and pitch, David. When he goes to the bullpen, he's fine, because he doesn't think. **Álex Cora** will be good for him. He's a calming influence. . . . **Joe Kelly** actually has the best fastball on the club. You'd think a guy like that would be desirable to a bunch of clubs as a closer. . . . The Yankees are good, but Boston is not just going to take a back seat to New York. Their starting pitching will determine how far they go.

## OVER / UNDER

**Working in Boston's favor:** the addition of Martinez, as well as 38 games against the O's and Rays. That alone could deliver nearly a third of last year's 93 wins.

# 015

## → THE LINEUP

- 1. RIGHTFIELD**  
**Mookie Betts**  
.298 BA/25 HR/26 SB
- 2. LEFTFIELD**  
**Andrew Benintendi**  
.284 BA/19 HR/17 SB
- 3. FIRST BASE**  
**Hanley Ramírez**  
.265 BA/19 HR/5 SB
- 4. DH**  
**J.D. Martinez**  
.287 BA/.563 SLG/35 HR
- 5. SHORTSTOP**  
**Xander Bogaerts**  
.287 BA/15 HR/13 SB

## 6. THIRD BASE Rafael Devers

.279 BA/20 HR/7 SB



The 21-year-old produced in 58 games in '17; with stars around him, he will tee off.

## FANTASY BREAKOUT

- 7. CENTERFIELD**  
**Jackie Bradley Jr.**  
.257 BA/18 HR/8 SB
- 8. SECOND BASE**  
**Dustin Pedroia**  
.286 BA/9 HR/4 SB
- 9. CATCHER**  
**Christian Vázquez**  
.260 BA/5 HR/6 SB

## → THE STAFF

- 1. LH STARTER**  
**Chris Sale**  
15 W/3.14 ERA/1.03 WHP
- 2. LH STARTER**  
**David Price**  
13 W/3.75 ERA/1.19 WHP
- 3. LH STARTER**  
**Drew Pomeranz**  
11 W/4.20 ERA/1.34 WHP
- 4. RH STARTER**  
**Rick Porcello**  
12 W/4.40 ERA/1.26 WHP
- CLOSER**  
**Craig Kimbrel**  
33 SV/2.63 ER/13.8 K9

## → THE SKIPPER

**Álex Cora**

## THE PAYOFF PITCH

The Red Sox have so many young stars that you can lose track of them—especially the ones having an off year. **Xander Bogaerts**, 25, won a World Series ring in Boston at 20, was the everyday shortstop at 21, made the All-Star team at 23 and . . . was a mild disappointment at 24. On July 6 of last year, Bogaerts was hit on the hand by a pitch from the Rays' Jake Faria. He left the game hitting .308/.363/.455 with 30 extra-base hits. Bogaerts never went on the DL after that and never missed more than two games in a row, but the hand injury wiped out his offense. He hit .232/.321/.340 the rest of the season, with just 18 extra-base hits. If Bogaerts is more like the four-to-five win player he was in 2015 and '16, that could be enough to push the Red Sox past the Yankees in the tight AL East.



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